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31 Dec**Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT*****OGC Has Reviewed***

TO : Office of the General Counsel
ATTENTION: [REDACTED] 25X1A9a
FROM : Acting Comptroller

DATE: DEC 30 1954

SUBJECT: Reimbursement for Parking Fees in the Use of Privately Owned Automobiles on Official Business

REFERENCE: (1) Standardized Government Travel Regulations, as amended
1 August 1952
(2) Comptroller General's Decision B-121024, dated
24 September 1954

(34 Comp. Gen. 139)

1. Several of the offices throughout the Agency authorize the use of privately owned automobiles on official business for local transportation and in many instances payments of parking fees are involved. In view of the recent decision by the Comptroller General, reference (2) above, there is some question with respect to the propriety of reimbursing employees for parking fees on actual expense basis.

2. The Standardized Government Travel Regulations provide that the reimbursement to employees for expenses related to the use of privately owned automobiles may be authorized or approved on either (a) an actual expense basis, provided, the aggregate of allowable expenses does not exceed the cost of transportation available by common carrier, or (b) on a mileage basis, not to exceed 7 cents per mile, with additional allowances for the actual cost of ferry fares, and bridge, road and tunnel tolls.

3. The Comptroller General, in a recent decision, reference (2) above, replying to a case concerning parking fees paid by officers and employees in the use of privately owned automobiles within their posts of duty, stated the following:

"Section 4 of the Travel Expense Act of 1949, 63 Stat. 166, under which the allowance of mileage to an officer or an employee for the use of a privately owned automobile on official travel is authorized, is a commutation of the expense of operating the automobile and precludes any additional allowance on an actual expense basis other than the actual cost of ferry fares, and bridge, road and tunnel tolls. Hence, when an officer or employee receives reimbursement on a mileage basis for the use of a privately owned automobile, he is required to assume all other expenses of operating said car, including but not limited to parking fees. Accordingly, in the situation presented, officers and employees of your Agency may not be reimbursed on a mileage basis and, also, for parking fees, Sec. 32 Comptroller General 74.

Concerning the reimbursement of parking fees in the circumstances presented, and where mileage is not administratively authorized, I am of the opinion that under existing laws and regulations the payment thereof is not authorized."

The second paragraph of the above quotation would seem to be at variance with the provisions of the Standardized Government Travel Regulations for reimbursement on an actual expense basis. However, this may be due to the circumstances involved in the specific case presented.

4. The most equitable method of reimbursing officers and employees of this Agency for the use of privately owned automobiles on official business would seem to be as follows:

a. On a mileage basis for each trip as long as the computed amount was equal to or in excess of the amount paid for parking, or

b. On an actual expense basis for each trip when the reimbursement on a mileage basis would not cover the amount paid for parking, provided it did not exceed the amount of cost of transportation available by common carrier.

5. Agency employees engaged in activities requiring considerable local travel are usually issued blanket travel authorizations covering specified periods of time and it is proposed that these authorizations provide for reimbursement in accordance with the method stated in paragraph 4.

6. We would appreciate your reviewing this matter and advising as to whether the issuance of authorizations for local transportation on that basis would be inconsistent with the Standardized Government Travel Regulations and rulings of the Comptroller General.

7. With respect to activities involving security or special operational requirements, the Agency is not required to adhere to the Standardized Government Travel Regulations, and reimbursements for expense including parking fees are made if specifically authorized. 25X1A

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